



Riverfront Overlay Study

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

City Planning Commission

June 27, 2017



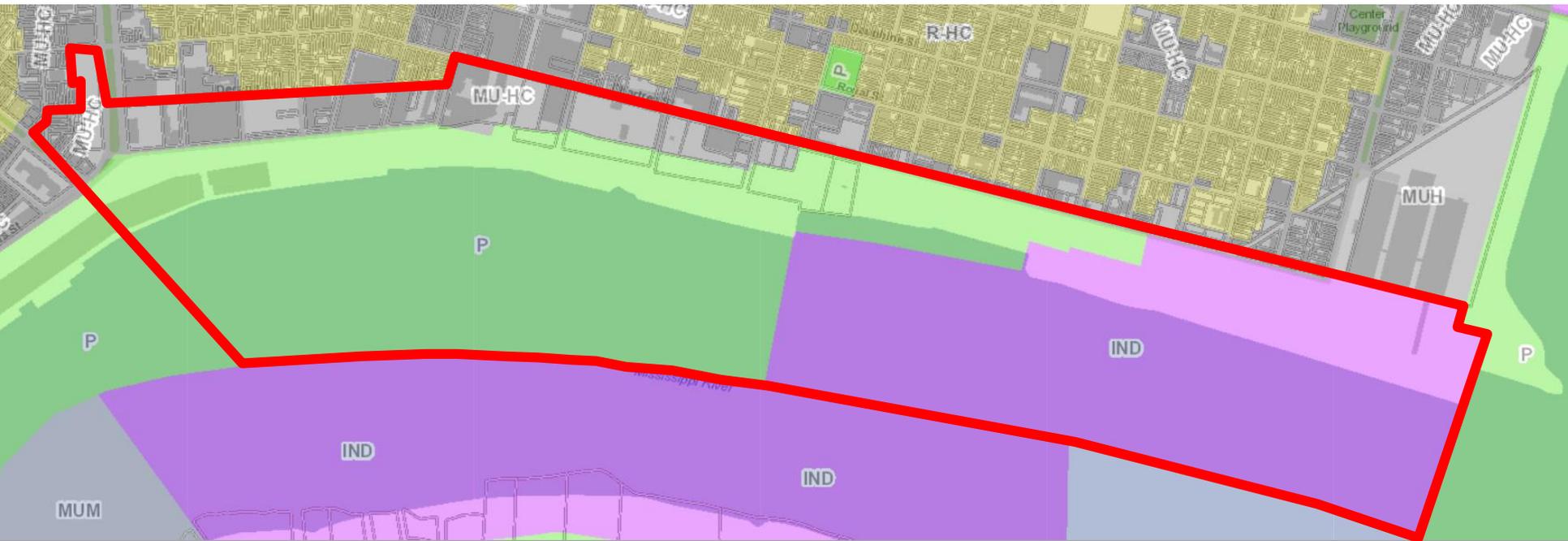
Master Plan

Future Land Use Designation

- Mixed-Use Historic Core – Increase convenience and walkability for neighborhood residents and visitors within and along edges of historic core neighborhoods

Master Plan Goals

- Create neighborhood centers with a mixture of higher density housing, retail, and other uses at neighborhood edges on underutilized industrial/commercial land and key transit hubs
- Take advantage of vacant land on higher ground for higher density uses



Recommendations

Recommendations related to Design Standards

- Eliminate bonus provision of Section 18.13.G for the study area.
- Retain general design standards (View Corridors, Active Ground Floors)
- Limit maximum height to 40 ft. (max 3 stories) at street frontage, require stepback, and allow up to 75 ft. (max 6 stories) towards the River with 3.5 max FAR, on the land side of the flood wall.



Recommendations

Recommendations related to Boundaries

- Differing zoning approaches are needed for each distinct RIV District area.
- Recommended additional height and FAR allowances should only apply to landside of floodwall.

Recommendations related to riverfront access

- Explore other funding methods for additional crossings.

Recommendations related to public input in the development process

- Allow maximum height and FAR by right – not through the Conditional Use process
- Public input, in the form of design recommendations, is better addressed in the HDLC process.

Further Consideration

Design

- Public comments expressed desire for design requirements that discourage the “wall-effect”
- Staff recommends amendments to bulk and area requirements that would help ensure that the maximum height is compatible with the adjacent neighborhood
- The HDLC review process will help ensure variety and quality of design

Height

- Some public comments stated that 75 feet is too tall for structures in Marigny and Bywater
- Staff agrees that a 75-foot structure at the Chartres/Decatur St. frontages may not be appropriate
- Staff recommends that structures be limited to a height of 40 feet at its Chartres/Decatur St. frontage and gradually step back to maximum height of 75 feet
- Additional height would allow for increased density and housing units, and would take advantage of these sites’ unique location close to the Mississippi River.

Further Consideration

Different neighborhoods, different context

- Public comments stated that the Marigny and Bywater neighborhoods are different and thus should be regulated differently
- Staff agrees that ultimately the adopted design guidelines and bulk and yard regulations should be sensitive to the differences between the two neighborhoods

Historic character of neighborhoods

- Public comments stated concern that additional height would be damaging to the historic character of the neighborhoods
- The subject sites were historically developed with a mix of low-density residential structures and higher intensity industrial uses. These developments were later demolished to make way for railroad and port expansion.
- The institution of form-based standards which outline where extra height is permitted can serve to transition height levels so that height at the street edge is compatible with adjacent historic properties.

Further Consideration

Affordable Housing

- Public comments expressed concern that the staff's recommendation does not require the provision of affordable housing for developments in the Riverfront Overlay
- The staff supports affordable housing and the City Planning Commission has recommended, in the Smart Housing Mix Study, that new residential developments of a certain size provide a percentage of affordable units in strong markets in the city.

Public Input in the Development Process

- Public comments requested that additional height be subject to the Conditional Use or Variance process
- The staff believes that proposed 75 feet height maximum coupled with a step-back provision will establish an appropriate buildings for the properties in the Riverfront Overlay
- All sites in Marigny and Bywater in the Riverfront Overlay are within a full-control HDLC local historic district
- The massing and design of developments will would be best reviewed through the required HDLC review process.

United States Army Corps of Engineers

- Public comments raised concern about construction activities so close to the flood wall and the Mississippi River levee
- Staff consulted the USACE and the Orleans Levee District (OLD) to clarify the protocols for review of within 1,500 feet of the MS River levee
- The OLD monitors and permits all construction within 1,500 feet of the MS River Flood control structures
- The OLD reviews proposals and consults the USACE for technical recommendations
- The goal of review is to ensure the effectiveness of the flood protections system
- There are no specific prohibitions on development or building height
- Each application considered on case-by-case basis

NEXT STEPS

- City Planning Commission to forward study to City Council
- Any changes to the CZO require a text amendment which involves a separate public hearing process by the City Planning Commission and City Council